APPENDIX C

TRANSCRIPT OF THE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING TRANSCRIPT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT PROPOSED NBACC FACILITY AT FORT DETRICK, MARYLAND

Frederick Community College
Jack B. Kussmaul Theater
7932 Opossumtown Pike
Frederick, MD 21702

Tuesday, June 22, 2004
7:00 p.m.

Reported by:

Timothy Wright
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FREDERICK, MARYLAND, JUNE 22, 2004
7:00 P.M.
PROCEEDINGS

MR. TIGHE: Good evening, folks. I'll start as people are taking their seats. Good evening, my name's Donald Tighe. And, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security I'd like to thank you for joining us here tonight.

This is called a scoping meeting where first we will detail the proposed scope of a research facility being considered to join the scientific community of Fort Detrick; and second, this is where we'll accept public comments on that proposed facility.

It is an official process, so that's why we want to have the refreshments outside for and after this formal component so there can be some discussion and interaction outside.

As part of this scoping meeting our remarks from the stage and following our remarks any comments from audience members they choose to make will be part of the formal record that will be publicly available.

The comments from this microphone, ours and subsequently yours, are being transcribed here by a court reporter. And, that transcription will be part of the public record.

I have a list of names and home towns from those who have already said they would like to make public comments from the microphone later this evening and if you haven't yet filled out a card we'll have people in strategic locations with them available to you.

As we will discuss, while your remarks will be part of the public record, tonight is just the first day of what will be over a two week window for public comment period. It will extend until July 8th, next month, and there will be a subsequent forty-five day public comments window later this year and we'll walk through that schedule.

For tonight, following our remarks from the stage, it will be your opportunity to make remarks from the microphone for the public comments record and while several scientists and staff members of the Department of Homeland Security are here tonight to talk over refreshments, the public comments period will just consist of your remarks said for the record here at this microphone in addition to those submitted through the multi-week public comment period.

Too, in all fairness to all speakers, I will ask that remarks be limited to three minutes and I'll come back to the microphone after our presentation to try to keep us moving from each public comment to the next.

We do hope that after tonight's speakers you'll have a better sense of who, what, where, why and when of this proposed facility. And, since sometimes governments use too many acronyms I'll mention the program's full name in accordance with its mission it's called the National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center. The initials are NBACC or pronounced NBACC in case you see that later on tonight.

Tonight you'll hear from three program managers that are part of science and technology in the Department of Homeland Security which oversees this mission called the Office of Research & Development. They will talk first about the timing of this process.

Secondly, about the function of the facility and then about the safety of the facility. First we will hear from Robert Hooks, retired from a last year Navy after a twenty year career as a nuclear trained submarine officer which also included work at the National Security Agency.

Secondly, we will hear from Dr. Gerald Parker, who joined the Homeland Security after a career that included service with the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute for Infectious Diseases and lastly we'll hear from Dr. Carol Linden, who joined Homeland Security after a career that included service with Department of Defense Chemical and Biological Research group.

Both Dr. Parker and Dr. Linden know this area well and you can ask them about their local ties over refreshments later.

I'd also like to acknowledge in the audience the Director of Homeland Security's Office of Research & Development, Dr. Maureen McCarthy. Dr. McCarthy, there in the blue, thanks.

Also a well recognized face in this community I would like to acknowledge Colonel John Ball. He's here also. Commanding officer of our neighbor, Fort Detrick. Colonel Ball, thank you for coming.

And, with that let us continue along the agenda and we'll start by bringing up to the microphone Mr. Robert Hooks.

MR. HOOKS: Next slide, please. Good evening, I would like to provide you with a quick overview of the environmental process for the proposed construction of the NBACC facility at Fort Detrick. As we begin the formal environmental process this public scoping process provides an opportunity for public input which is crucial for fully conducting the environmental analysis necessary for the proposed construction of the facility.

How this formal process is to be covered comes from the National Environmental & Policy Act, commonly referred to as NEPA. The NEPA process is very public and as such your comments are welcome so that we at the Department of Homeland Security fully understand the type, nature and the extent of environmental issues that need to be addressed as we move forward with the proposed building of this facility.

The past thirty-five years ago NEPA's governmental umbrella environmental review law. NEPA requires federal agencies to examine the effects of their proposed actions on the environment which includes those impacts to neighboring communities and we will consider the effects to both the built and the natural environment in our analysis.

An environmental impact statement is required when the proposed action may result in significant impact to the environment. The EIS process is a formal process with specific steps. The notice of intent first is published announcing the intent to prepare an environmental impact statement. The notice of intent for this proposed impact facility appeared in the Federal Register on June 7th and in local Frederick newspapers, such as the Frederick News Post, the Gazette and the Fort Detrick Standard over the past couple weeks. Second, is the holding of tonight's scoping meeting to determine again the type, extent and the nature of environmental concerns that the public has. Through July 8th we are seeking comments and issues from everybody in any form with which they wish to submit them.

We'll be analyzing these comments to identify potential environmental issues and to identify potential alternatives to our proposed actions. All comments received will be considered and addressed in the draft environmental impact statement which will be provided to the public and government agencies for their review and comment.

Comments on the draft environmental statement will then be collected, considered and addressed in the final environmental impact statement.

When the final environmental impact statement is written it will include the selection of a preferred alternative and a course of action or no action. The document will be available for public review and comment for at least thirty days. Thereafter, the Department of Homeland Security will make a final decision referred to as a record of decision.

Going back to the scoping process our goal this evening is to receive your comments on the type, nature and extent of the environmental issues that are important to you that need to be considered in this draft environmental impact statement that's being prepared. This meeting is one way for you to express your comments.

Other ways are for you to mail, telephone, fax, or e-mail to the address up there, your comments, through July 8th.

This slide walks you through the scoping period of the environmental impact statement process. Comments and issues that are identified related to the construction of this facility will be

considered and addressed in the draft environmental impact statement expected to be published late this summer.

As you see, the notice of intent has already been issued back on the 7th of June. We are holding this public scoping meeting and then the period for public scoping activities comments from the public after which we'll prepare the draft environmental impact statement.

Once the draft environmental impact statement is completed we enter the next phase of the process which begins with a notice of availability of the draft environmental impact statement. The draft environmental impact statement will be sent to interested parties and will appear at various locations locally such as in the public library.

For review and comment period of the draft environmental statement will last for forty-five days to allow the public to provide comments on the draft environmental impact statement. Comments will again be considered and addressed in the final EIS.

We expect that that final EIS will be prepared in late 2004.

Once the final EIS is written there will be a formal announcement again noting the availability of this document for the public's review. Like before, interested parties will again receive copies and this document will be made publicly available. There will be a thirty day review period after which the record of decision will be published.

The Department of Homeland Security decision, the record of decision will probably be published in early 2005.

This slide depicts the entire process and serves to demonstrate the process is designed to allow ample time for comment and review by the public to insure that all environmental issues are considered and addressed.

In closing I want to convey to you that the Department of Homeland Security is very interested in hearing about your environmental concerns related to this project. I will now turn over the podium to Dr. Gerry Parker, who will talk to you about the scientific research and the NBACC facility itself. Thank you.

DR. PARKER: Good evening. Many of you I see a lot of familiar faces in the audience and many of you know me as Gerry Parker. By way of further introduction many of you also know that I recently retired from the Army, spent twenty-six years active Army, a lot of that time at Fort Detrick and retired from the U.S. Army Medical Research Material Command.

I am a former commander of USAMRIID and I've led several major medical research programs with the Army. I'm a long-standing member of the Frederick community where I reside today.

First I'm pleased you took the time to join us this evening so that I can have an opportunity to talk about NBACC and the NBACC programs. Before I get into the research specific to the NBACC facility I want to provide information about the mission of the Department of Homeland Security and how NBACC fits into that mission in the National Biodefense strategy.

Then I will explain specific goals of NBACC research that will be conducted at the proposed NBACC facility and why we propose its location at Fort Detrick. Finally, I will close my remarks with a description of the facility itself.

As you recall at the terrorists attacks on America on September 11th, 2001 the President and Congress created the Department of Homeland Security by the Homeland Security Act of 2002. This legislation brought together and united twenty-two agencies into one integrated department to focus on homeland security.

The department's homeland security mission can be summarized simply. Protect the homeland and protect the American public. But, of course, it is necessarily more complex than that. In the mission statement reads "we will lead a unified national effort to secure America. We will prevent and deter terrorists attacks and protect against, and respond to threats and hazards, for the nation. We will insure safe and secure borders, welcome lawful immigration and visitors,

and promote free flow of commerce."The department's priorities and our science and technology priorities in particular can be found in several documents to include the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the FY04 Congressional Appropriations Act for the Department of Homeland Security, the President's National Strategy for Homeland Security, and ten Homeland Security Presidential directives.

Outlined on this chart are the strategic bills of the department which can also be found on our web page, our home page along with much more detailed descriptions, our mission, vision, and further details of these goals.

These strategic goals are geared for preventing and protecting our nation from a terrorist attack. And, responding to and recovering from attack if one occurs. The department and our research programs must consider a broad spectrum of threats to include, biological, chemical, radiological, nuclear and high explosives. And, we are dedicated to taking the necessary steps to anticipate and prevent such attacks from ever occurring in the first place.

The department's biological defense efforts to include the NBACC research programs support the first four of these strategic goals: Awareness, prevention, production and response.

The NBACC will have a role in supporting these four bills. But the NBACC will have added emphasis on anticipating the threat and attribution if an attack occurs. The nation is committed for preparing for a potential bio terrorist attack. Our nation's Biodefense efforts will have dual benefit to society.

These efforts will help protect America from biological events resulting from a terrorist attack, accidental occurrences or natural disease outbreaks.

Now we'll turn my attention to the NBACC program specifically. Excuse me; we'll first talk about why Biodefense is important. The administration has recognized biological attacks as a very real threat to this nation and has made strengthening the nation's defense against bio terrorism a critical national priority.

As a result a joint Homeland Security presidential directive and National Security directive were recently released in April 2004 entitled "Biodefense for the Twenty-first Century." This national strategy provides a comprehensive framework for our nation's Biodefense efforts. The directive built upon past accomplishments at all levels and it identifies specific roles and responsibilities and integrates the programs and efforts of various communities to include the national security, homeland security, medicine, public health, agricultural, law, law enforcement, intelligence and diplomatic and to sustain and focus efforts against biological terrorism.

The Department of Homeland Security and our science and technology Biodefense programs have explicit responsibilities in this integrated national Biodefense effort and the research conducted at the proposed NBACC facility will play a key role in supporting the national strategy and our own department's mission.

And, just as importantly, the NBACC will help guide and inform national Biodefense objectives and priorities. More information on this presidential directive Biodefense for the twenty-first century can be found at www.WhiteHouse.Gov.

And, now we'll turn to NBACC program specifically. In accordance with the national strategy for homeland security and the Homeland Security Act, DHS, science and technology has established an NBACC program and proposed an NBACC facility whose mission is to conduct bioforensic analysis and scientific characterization.

The NBACC programs and proposed facility are designed to provide the nation with the capability to provide the scientific basis for awareness of biological threats and attribution of their use if we are attacked.

Within the proposed NBACC facility there will be two major centers to conduct the threat characterization and bioforensics missions. And, they consist of the National Bioforensic Analysis Center or NBFAC and the BioThreat Characterization Center, BTCC.

The first mission of the NBACC that I will describe is bioforensics. What is bioforensics, what does that mean? Bioforensics involves the technical analysis of evidence from a bio crime, terrorist attack or a biological warfare attack. To obtain biological fingerprint, determine origin and method of attack to link the event to a perpetrator whether a criminal, terrorist or state...

In the presidential directive Biodefense for the Twenty-first Century that I just spoke about the president directed the establishment of the National Bioforensic Analysis Center to be the lead federal facility to conduct and facilitate the technical forensic analysis and interpretation of materials recovered following a biological attack and support of the appropriate lead federal agency and to provide the government with bioforensic capability.

You can read the goal of the NBFAC from this chart. Specific objectives of the NBFAC consist of the following: Development, evaluate and validate analytical tools and procedures to support bioforensic case work. Conduct bioforensic case work in supporting bioforensic research. Evaluate, validate and establish methods to identify biological threat agents. Establish bioforensic reference collections for comparative analysis and establish a program to achieve national standards for bioforensic case work.

The second mission of the NBFAC facility is to conduct systematic and rigorous scientific research to include Biodefense risk assessment and to close critical information gaps through laboratory research to better understand current and future biological threats. Why is this important? The Administration and Congress have made a commitment in strengthening our Biodefense posture. Accordingly, the national investment in Biodefense has gone up significantly across several sectors and across the Federal Government.

Biological threats are evolving and changing and currently there is a lot we do not know about bio threats. The information gained from NBACC's bio characterization research is needed to inform and guide those who develop countermeasures to defend against bio terrorism. Thus NBACC research will be conducted to enhance our understanding and awareness of biological threats. To improve our defensive posture and enable protection of our population.

The Bio Threat Characterization Center is the principal Federal program that will conduct research to define the characteristics of the bio threat agents and conduct rigorous Biodefense risk assessments to determine threats to public health and other critical infrastructures and the information will help guide national Biodefense research, development and acquisitions. Specific objectives of the research will include: Implementing rigorous bio threat risk analysis methodology; conduct targeted laboratory studies to close critical information gaps; assess countermeasure vulnerabilities; do analysis and laboratory studies where required; and develop validated animal models in aerobiology laboratory standards with our strategic partners to include the Department of Defense and Health & Human Services.

I have explained why the United States is making an important investment in Biodefense and NBACC's critical role in the national Biodefense strategy. With this focus of effort on bioforensics and scientific characterization we require modern, secure, sustainable, and dedicated facilities to accomplish our Department of Homeland Security mission objectives and specific responsibilities called out in the presidential directive Biodefense for the Twenty-first Century.

Further, we propose to locate the NBACC facility at Fort Detrick so as to be co-located with our strategic partners in the Department of Defense, Health & Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture and to provide optimal support for our strategic partners in law enforcement community; principally the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Co-location on the national agency Biodefense campus at Fort Detrick allows us and our partners to leverage available infrastructure, effectively implement complementary and synergistic programs for our Biodefense mission responsibilities and fulfillment of our shared responsibilities in the national stratus for Biodefense and enhance scientific programmatic collaboration. Simply stated the proposed location on the Biodefense campus affords us the best opportunity to achieve efficient interagency collaboration, coordination and integration to best achieve homeland security.

The proposed location on the interagency campus at Fort Detrick is at this site. For reference we are sitting at Frederick Community College which is located in this area. The U.S. Army Medical Research & Institute of Infectious Diseases is located here. And, the front gate of Fort Detrick is located here.

As my last agenda item I will describe the scope of the proposed facility. The facility itself is estimated to be approximately one hundred and sixty thousand gross square feet. But that is not all laboratory space. A tremendous amount of that space is support infrastructure to include office space, maintenance areas and other administrative support space.

The net laboratory space is estimated to be approximately seventy thousand square feet with most of the space dedicated to BSL2, Biosafety Level 2 and Biosafety Level 3 laboratories. The remaining twenty percent for the lab space in the facility is at -- it will be Biosafety Level 4. The estimated number of employees, including scientists, administrative staff, support staff, technical staff, is estimated to be a hundred and twenty. The estimated completion date for the facility is 2008.

In summary, the NBACC will play a critical role in supporting the integrated national Biodefense strategy and NBACC will play a critical role in protecting America from biological terrorism.

I will now turn the presentation over to Dr. Carol Linden who will discuss biosafety and Biosafety Levels of this proposed facility. Thank you very much.

DR. LINDEN: Good evening. My name's Carol Linden and like Gerry Parker I'm very happy to see many familiar faces in the audience here tonight. For a number of years, as some of you know, I served as the Chief of Research Program for USAMRIID. During that time I worked very closely with commanders and with the safety office in addressing issues and policies concerning biological safety and security.

I now work with the Department of Homeland Security and I'm here tonight to provide you with an overview about biological safety levels. Biological safety is one very important facet of an overall safety program to which the NBACC is fully committed.

First a very brief history of biological safety levels. You'll see this term abbreviated BSL or sometimes BL or if you've really been around for a long time P, and I'm not really sure what P stands for. Whatever letters you use levels go from one, which is the lowest, to four which is the highest. And, I'll be explaining each of these in more detail.

Safety has always been a concern to the scientists who work with infectious materials. But early on in the 1950's and '60's there was a lack of national standards regarding biological safety. Gradually, under the auspices of what is now the NIH, National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control, CDC, experts published a national consensus document which is now this 4th Edition which is called Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories or the BMBL for short.

The web site at the top of the slide is a location where you can actually read the entire document for yourself if you're interested. This describes the combinations of standard and special microbiological practices, safety equipment and facilities that constitute the Biosafety Levels of 1 through 4 and are recommended for work with infectious agents in various laboratory settings.

The latest edition of the BMBL also includes guidance on risk assessment so that laboratory workers can better determine the appropriate safety needs for working with particular infectious agents and it includes guidance on the increased security needs of microbiological laboratories in view of the concerns about bio terrorism that have arisen in recent years.

An important part of biosafety is training and oversight for all Biosafety Levels with increasing requirements corresponding to the increased levels. The NBACC will fully comply with the CDC guidelines and all other standards of practice in the scientific community. Its scientists and staff will be highly trained and the work that they perform will be overseen carefully.

The basic idea behind biological safety is containment. Containment prevents exposure of the laboratory worker and the environment to the infectious materials being worked on. The environment includes everyone and everything else. Other people in the lab or in the building as well as the environment outside the building.

We talk about primary containment and secondary containment. Primary containment focuses on protecting the laboratory worker through the use of personal protective equipment such as gloves, lab coats, respirators and such as well as engineering control such as biological safety cabinets.

Secondary containment refers to the steps that are put in place to protect everyone else. These include features of facility design such as special air handling and restricting access to the laboratory as well as health practices such as decontaminating laboratory waste.

This slide summarizes the individual Biosafety Levels 1 through 4. As you can see safety measures increase in proportion to the risks posed by the organisms and the types of procedures performed. At Biosafety Level 1, the lowest level, you can picture a high school laboratory. I think everyone has been in one of those. Work can be conducted with organisms that do not pose any particular risk to healthy humans or to the environment. An example of such an organism, as shown on the slide, is *bacillus subtilis*, a common soil bacterium. Basic sanitary and hygiene practice would apply such as washing your hands after handling any organism and prohibiting eating, drinking, handling contact lenses, storing food, et cetera.

The lab is not necessarily separated from the general traffic patterns in the building and work is generally conducted on open bench tops using standard microbiological practices.

The higher Biosafety Levels reflect the measures put in place to reduce the risk of the workers and the environment from increasingly hazardous organisms or procedures.

Biosafety Level 2 is one step up from Biosafety Level 1. It includes all the very basic Biosafety Level 1 practices and adds more safety measures and training. A Biosafety Level 2 lab would be like a clinical or diagnostic lab in a hospital or research lab in a university.

It's suitable for work involving agents of moderate potential hazard to personnel and the environment, for example, Hepatitis C or Salmonella. It differs from Biosafety Level 1 in that laboratory personnel have specific training in handling the agents they're working with and they're directed by scientists. Access to the laboratory is limited when work is being conducted. Extreme precautions are taken with sharp items that might be contaminated, such as needles or any broken glassware. And, certain procedures in which infectious aerosols where splashes might be created are conducted within biological safety cabinets.

Biological safety cabinets are those large boxes you see pictures of when people are sitting there and manipulating things inside. There's a current of air circulating inside that cabinet to protect people who are working in front of it. Other than that a Biosafety Level 2 lab is kind of a standard research laboratory. You lock the doors, limit access, decontaminate infectious waste and you use good biological and sanitary practices.

Then we move up one step to Biosafety Level 3. Again Biosafety Level 3 builds on all the features of Biosafety Level 2 and adds to it with increased requirements for training and oversight. Biosafety Level 3 is where containment really kicks in. It is appropriate for work with organisms which may cause serious or potentially lethal disease as a result of exposure by the inhalation route, for example, for organisms that cause tuberculosis or Q fever. Laboratory personnel must have specific training in handling these pathogenic and potentially lethal agents, and are closely supervised.

At Biosafety Level 3 you also see the implementation of various features of facility design and engineering controls and other steps to protect the environment. Negative pressure of the rooms, sealed seams and openings in the room construction; in other words, where there are penetrations for electrical conduit and things like that is all sealed. Surfaces that are easy to

decontaminate and methods for decontaminating all the laboratory wastes such as autoclave or steam sterilizer are right in the laboratory.

Depending on the laboratory design the air exhaust may also be HEPA-filtered. You may be familiar with these filters from air purifiers or even vacuum cleaners. They remove infectious particles that you could potentially breathe from the air.

Importantly, any equipment that might produce aerosols is contained in boxes or hoods that exhaust the air through HEPA filters before being discharged into the laboratory.

Biosafety Level 3 facility design and operational procedures must be documented and the facility tested for verification that these parameters have been met prior to operation.

Finally, we get to Biosafety Level 4. Biosafety Level 4 is the one you see in the movies, although generally the movie labs are a lot prettier than the real ones. The NBACC was proposed to have about twenty percent of its laboratory space for Biosafety Level 4. Again, Biosafety Level 4 builds on all the features of Biosafety Level 3 and adds to them.

This is where we have the most safety, the most security, the most training and the most oversight. Because the organisms that require Biosafety Level 4 not only present a high risk of aerosol transmission, but also present a high risk of serious illness or death to an infected person. In other words, in Biosafety Level 4 you really do not want to come in contact with what you're working with.

There are actually only a small number of organisms, all of them viruses that are classified at this level. Ebola virus is one of the better known of these viruses. The fundamental principle of Biosafety Level 4 is that there's a physical barrier between the person and what they're working with. This barrier could be a space suit, a positive pressure suit, a supplied breathing air or it could be a hood line or glove box. Technically a Level 3 biological safety cabinet, which is sealed, has negative air flow and all these -- is filtered through multiple HEPA filters.

In addition, rigorous controls are in place to prevent anything from leaving the laboratory into the environment. All the waste streams, solid, air, water, are sterilized or decontaminated. Even the people have to take a shower to leave the lab.

There are numerous redundant safety features at Biosafety Level 4 to include backup mechanical systems and even though people might be wearing a positive pressure suit they would still handle infectious material in appropriate biological safety cabinets.

Access to laboratory is strictly controlled and it's restricted to only those people who have a need to be there.

This concludes the discussion about our Biosafety Levels. As Dr. Parker mentioned the bulk of the laboratories placed in the NBACC will be Biosafety Levels 2 and 3. At all levels the NBACC will rigorously follow both the letter and the spirit of the National Biological Safety Guidelines in order to insure safe and secure laboratories for both the workers and those around them. Thank you.

I will now turn the podium back over to Donald Tighe for him to finish this part of the session.

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, Dr. Linden. And, thank you to Mr. Robert Hooks for addressing the purpose of the National Environmental Policy Act and the scoping process and to Dr. Parker for addressing the scientific mission of the facility and Dr. Linden for addressing the biosafety design of the proposed facility.

I opened the evening by saying I hope that as our comments ended and before we opened up the floor to your public comments that you would have a better sense of the who, what, where, why and when of this proposed facility.

The who, in addition to our speakers, include how we got here. The Department of Homeland Security is pursuing a unique counter-terrorism mission of the department including awareness, prevention, protection and response. The will of our elected representatives in

Congress is reflected in their passage of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 which dictates this mission as well as the Administration who released the Biodefense for the Twenty-first Century presidential directive this April.

The why is the forensics and the threat characterization capabilities of this proposed National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center. The scoping and environmental impact statements and the public comment process in the commitment for safety, facilities, equipment, training and procedures.

And, all of those capabilities integrated here with the National Interagency Biodefense Campus at Fort Detrick. And, the why is because this nation has work to do on the forensics and threat characterization necessary to strengthen our security posture. Starting here tonight with the public comments use the microphone, or written, if that's what you prefer as well as the coming weeks of the public comments for the written record and both on screen and your packet when you were welcomed here you saw e-mail and addresses for sending comments in print that the draft environmental impact statement will address.

With that, our remarks have ended here for tonight. We'll obviously be outside with refreshments afterwards and welcome conversations, but we now segue to a portion of the evening where members of the audience are welcome to express their statements for the public record at the microphone. There are cards outside for everybody and we'll invite people to the microphone in order. But if you don't have one you can raise your hand now or as we're proceeding you can do so as well.

And, you'll recall that on the card it mentions that each person who supplied their address will be added to the environmental impact statement mailing list and receive any documents that are produced.

The first person I'd like to ask to the microphone -- oh, I'm sorry, just a reminder that I will ask speakers to stick to three minutes, but hopefully that won't come up, but I'll try to re-approach the microphone if I need to ask to do that in fairness to everybody.

First to the microphone, though, is Paul Gordon out of Frederick, Maryland.

MR. GORDON: Paul Gordon. I live less than a third of a mile from the site where the proposed lab is going to be. I have a daughter and her husband and three grandchildren that live less than a third of a mile from the site. And, as a former elected official I feel I have a responsibility to these fifty thousand residents to speak up.

The world has changed since 9/11 and yet our government agencies still think in mostly in conventional ways. Our bureaucracy advocates laboratory handling hazardous materials in one spot, because it allows better communication and saves money is their bucks thinking.

If terrorists detonate a dirty bomb or fire a dirty rocket and pierces the shell of a single lab and releases biological materials into the atmosphere they have created the first (*worst*) biological radioactive contamination in history by hitting on lab at Detrick.

They will have contaminated and disabled a laboratory center for months, if not years. Spread fear throughout the country. Perhaps kill thousands of people. That is the reality of today and all agencies, including Homeland Security, should be leading the pack to see that doesn't happen instead of creating attraction for terrorists.

Despite the safety that has been developed within the laboratories handling hazardous materials and (inaudible) at Detrick the world has changed. Whether it's a dirty bomb or a plane crashing into such a facility pierces the shell of the laboratory, what use are present safety standards? This is why such facilities belong in places far from populated areas. They belong in air space that's restricted -- Detrick is not -- with hazardous research done in bomb proof bunkers. They belong under a large perimeter of security to be maintained instead of in the midst of sixty thousand people.

Of course you can respond by the Department of Health & Human Services has from their environmental impact statement dated September 19th, 2003 for their lab proposed at Detrick. Quote *"Terrorists acts. It is clear that the United States is vulnerable to significant acts of terrorism. In the context of MCE analysis, acts of terrorism are not considered as reasonably foreseeable events." The probability of such attacks upon the proposed IRF is impossible to predict."* They couldn't predict the hazard. They didn't ask your agency or any other for your opinion on how they might handle the terrorists.

If you can tell the residents of this city with reasonable assurance that such concerns that I present then move forward with that phase. If you can't, then you either need to create a structure on a site which is 99% foolproof in this new age or adjust your plans to place the facility away from populated areas where less-than-full protection won't have the same threat for populated areas.

Ignoring of probability of terrorist attack and its predictability as I just read to you, that's unacceptable regardless of the cost of hardships it may require of your agency. That is the reality of this post-9/11 world.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, sir. Next, I call Mr. Henry Erbes from Frederick, Maryland.

MR. ERBES: Good evening, my name is Henry Erbes; I live at (inaudible) Frederick, Maryland.

[*Mr. Erbes submitted his comments in writing on June 25, 2004. His comments appear with the other written comments.*]

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, sir. Next is Lillian Herz from Frederick, Maryland.

MRS. HERZ: Thank you for allowing us to speak tonight. I feel like this is a repeat. I spoke at the first public meeting and I spoke at (inaudible), but the issues are the same in that the things that they were saying at that meeting. Somehow the introduction got cut off, so I'd like to repeat a few of that. I've lived in Frederick for over twenty-five years. I'm going to be a grandmother for the first time in December and my grandbaby will live right across from the entrance. I've been concerned about Fort Detrick the entire time I've lived here, and I'm even more concerned now with having it expanding the militarization of our medical research.

I don't agree with Homeland Security's approach of Biodefense. We went to a war in Iraq looking for weapons of mass destruction saying that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. We didn't find them. So we are serious as a result of our own efforts at Fort Detrick with the anthrax outbreak, the postal workers, citizens doing their jobs, and it's going to happen again.

My fear is that we need to turn around and start respecting the natural environment and not playing with it thinking that we can control everything we do. We know better. We can control this little aspect and we can control that little aspect and perhaps we can address the wide issues that the gentleman before me brought to our attention. Perhaps we can even afford to build what Mr. Gordon has suggested needs to be built in order to really provide safety for the citizens of Frederick. But, you know, we're not in charge. And, I just think we need to remember that. We need to remember that the world at war creates more war, and our real defense is in a security of citizens who are knowing what the problems are in other countries, what the problems are with other people so that we can help them to address their issues so that they don't have to (inaudible) so that they don't have to use our airplanes again so that we can live in a world of peace. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, ma'am. Next to the microphone, Malgo Schmidt of Frederick, Maryland.

MS. SCHMIDT: (Inaudible) [*According to notes recorded by BSA Environmental Services, Inc. personnel at the Public Scoping Meeting, Ms. Schmidt identified herself as a scientist in biotechnology and stated that human error is a greater risk for the proposed facility than an attack. She thought that a risk-benefit analysis of the project should be done.*]

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, ma'am. Next to the microphone, Liz Cameron, Frederick, Maryland.

MS. CAMERON: Hi. My name's Liz, forget the stuttering, I don't speak in front of people. But I will try. But this has been enough to make me try. [I was here for a Math class] I saw what people were doing from the window and all I see is they're building a new building and that was enough to make me come out and say something. You know this is wrong, to a certain extent he knows it is wrong. You must or you wouldn't be here. (inaudible). Put us in even more danger than we already are.

We have the ability to change and grow and expand, which is stretched out. We simply must pursue this or find another way. (inaudible). I don't want you to [do us this favor].

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, ma'am. Next to the microphone, Richard Ochs of Baltimore, Maryland.

MR. OCHS: Good evening. I'm past president of the Aberdeen (inaudible) [Proving Ground Hazardous Materials…] Citizens Coalition and I've been researching into hazards on military bases in Maryland for six years. I'm worried about (inaudible) escaping by accident or design. One year after the anthrax letters and the tightening up of security at Fort Detrick anthrax was discovered in the non-secure areas inside Fort Detrick. That was after the tightening up of security.

So accidents happen and happen in spite of even taking secure measures and now we find this year live anthrax was sent to California by mistake from the subcontractor here in Frederick.

This doesn't give me confidence that the security measures are really secure. Germs can also get out by design. That's what the anthrax letters were all about. Some disgruntled person or some conspiracy, we don't know yet who did it, but someone with a probably (inaudible) agenda deliberately mailed those anthrax letters from U.S. Laboratories.

That can happen again. And, as the U.S. Government throws billions of dollars building these labs all over the place on campuses around the country. This is not the only one. The likelihood of accidents and designed escapes increases.

Now, we would recommend that instead of taking this approach to security, which is a false sense of security, that the United States instead ratify the international agreement on biological weapons that can be worked out and that the United States ratify a protocol on verification and enforcement that's been sabotaged.

If you want to know the details on this you can go to my website which is called free from terror dot net, and I have literature here about that website.

The Federation of American Scientists on density labs are (inaudible) that by designing new diseases genetically modifying anthrax and other terrible diseases, presumably to design vaccines. But first we have to invent a new genetically modified disease before you can design a vaccine or any (inaudible) and meanwhile if this gets out before vaccine you have something horrible on your hands. To be inventing new diseases in this world is a crime against humanity.

(APPLAUSE)

This (inaudible) an international biological arms race so while the United States and the Bush Administration walked out and sabotaged these international treaties and is taking this dangerous route. Why shouldn't all the other countries around the world take the same approach? This is going to tip off an international biological arms race, and maybe our labs might be safe, we hope. But these labs around the world, will they be safe? We don't know, so may we suggest that we cooperate internationally instead of taking a rogue state approach.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, sir. If there's anyone who would like to make a comment who has not had a card you can raise your hand. Someone is standing here by the steps who has them. Secondly, the comments will be transcribed. There will be a public record and certainly will be addressing your agenda, which you're welcome to supplement your comments with anything written as we have to keep people to a time limit. Next to the microphone, John Darnell of Myersville, Maryland.

MR. DARNELL: I'm John Darnell from Myersville, Maryland. I'm a former resident of Frederick and a former employee at the Frederick Cancer Research Center, biochemist by trade. I'm currently employed by our local Congressman, Roscoe Bartlett, as his energy and environment project coordinator. And, I'd like to focus tonight on an opportunity this project represents apart from other issues which have been raised.

It seems to me that this is actually one of many or another of projects being proposed for the site, general site at Fort Detrick which could have a fairly massive impact on the environment. And, I'd like to direct your attention to the fact that the Congressman has secured funding to build a prototype building right here in Frederick County at the current (inaudible) which will serve as a visitor center as well as a showcase for technologies which will allow the site to be developed with zero impact on the environment.

That is to say that the facility is going to be designed to get everything it needs from what nature delivers to the site. That is to say, water supply will have to meet the water table and will come from rainfall. It will not discharge any polluting materials into the environment. It will recycle, reuse water on site. The heating and cooling, the electric power will all come from the sun and wind and perhaps even bio (inaudible) energy and there is technology out there which is probably not ready for prime time, but has the potential to take trash and convert it into hydrogen or fuel and to generate electricity. These are all technologies that are currently available and not widely known. So this facility will be designed to be a demonstration sites for these concepts.

What I'm proposing tonight is that the process here which is designed to look at the environmental impact consider the possibility that is possible. It's feasible actually to have almost no impact on the environment if we do things carefully and with some foresight.

There is a website, if you go to the Congressman's website you can find out information about the project. It's the website of the Maryland State Highway Administration, this is with FHA projects overlook. So I encourage you all to think a little outside the box here tonight. There are proposed billions of dollars for the development for future facility and I would hope that we can be enlightened enough that that facility, as well as the housing for the thousands of people who may become residents of this area to serve that facility be considered it possible for applications of these technologies. Thank you.

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, sir. Next to the microphone, Barry Kissin, Frederick, Maryland.

MR. KISSIN: Good evening. I'm also a person who is very upset about this proposed expansion. I don't think this kind of facility belongs anywhere, not in the remotest part of the world. What it is

devoted to doing, as I understand it, is it's devoted to developing potential biological threats so as to figure out the antidote.

If we look at the history of the biological warfare world I think what you'll find is that most of the technology comes from here. Comes from Fort Detrick. It's generated by this country. Everybody knows that the biological weapons that Saddam Hussein used against the Kurds and the Iranians was designed and supplied and approved by this country.

We've got a terrible (inaudible) here. We're not just playing defense, we're playing offense too. We think that we're going to gain (inaudible) by dominating the entire circle and what we're doing is adding another threat to everybody's survival.

I looked (inaudible) the definition of bio war is no antidote. What are we doing? We've got people with natural diseases that need health care here in this country, all over the world. Why aren't we using this expertise that you want to develop biowarfare, to helping people and supporting life.

(APPLAUSE)

There's a logical disconnect, gentlemen and ladies, there's a logical disconnect. You're telling our brother Paul Gordon that terrorism is not a reasonable foreseeability. Well, if it isn't what are we doing? I can give you a lot of -- I can rattle off ad nauseam, there are a lot more major events.

Today in the mainstream newspaper in Frederick we have an article sitting right on the editorial page. The earth is becoming more and more desert by the hundreds and thousands of square miles as we speak. It's called (inaudible). Are we going to get together and continue things like that? Are we going to spend the rest of our resources looking for better ways to kill each other?

(APPLAUSE)

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, sir. Next to the microphone, Robin Buck of Frederick, Maryland.

MS. BUCK: Hi. Barry's a tough act to follow. He's much more informed about the center of disease. I guess all I can do is speak from my heart and that is it's deeply disturbing to me that we need these resources, the intellectual resources, the financial resources and the natural resources that we have in this country.

If you just emulate that we do to create more (inaudible) of destruction. That we use half of our Federal budget goes for defense. But when you look at the actual facts of the matter we build bigger bombs. It's just, as Barry was saying, the cycle just increases. So now we're adding another level, another domain to explore opportunities for our eventual annihilation. I just -- it seems to me that there is a history that the more that we develop a potential for something, the greater the likelihood that that potential is used.

It is very disturbing to me that there is so little conversation on what would it take to create a conversation of peace? Just briefly, when 9/11 happened I happened to be in Michigan. I was in my folks' home. I had been living in New York. That afternoon, the next day I got a call (inaudible) one of my cousins called and I was very close with him. He was relieved to find out that I wasn't in New York. He didn't realize that I was in Michigan.

But his question was "why?" And, I keep asking that question, why. Why is it that as a nation we're reviled by others? Why is that? I think it's a question that bears looking into.

I lived in Norway back in the early '70's, I went to school there and I was approached one evening in a coffee house by a man eighteen years old and he just lit into me. I had never heard

anything like this before. He just lit into me, he said, "the United States is no better than the Soviet Union." And, I was stunned. Nobody had ever spoken to me that way.

We're the good guys. And, in the intervening years I've had time to look and I've had time to learn into our history and I'm deeply, deeply disturbed. The other night in the park the second to the last song was "I'm Proud To Be An American." Everybody stood and I couldn't bring myself to stand, because right now I'm not. I'm very ashamed and (inaudible) and I'd like that to be done. Thank you.

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, ma'am. Next to the microphone, Helen Alexander, Frederick, Maryland.

MS. ALEXANDER: I'm Helen Alexander; I was born in Frederick County. (inaudible). This whole project to me seems to be a re-entrenchment of chemical and biological warfare. It seems that the U.S. is the only country which can have WMD, weapons of mass destruction.

(APPLAUSE)

Yet the U.S. will not sign the pact against CB warfare. Who are we fooling? The whole world realizes where the present administration is headed regarding its foreign policies and the world does not trust us. I'm tired of the blarney about Fort Detrick always working on quote "defensive" unquote measures. It has always been offensive and looks as if it's going to continue on that basis in an even more pronounced way.

I'm really sorry my Congressman, Roscoe Bartlett, I don't know if he's (inaudible), pushed this project so vigorously. We already have the second largest city in Maryland. It used to be Rockville. It's Frederick, Maryland now. We don't need to create a second city devoted to chemical and biological warfare. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, ma'am. Next to the microphone, Chris Hines of Frederick, Maryland.

MR. HERZ: First of all, my name's Chris Herz, H-E-R-Z.

MR. TIGHE: Excuse me, Chris Herz, thank you.

MR. HERZ: And, I'm at my family residence at 636 Lee Place. It's less than a long city block (inaudible). This family home will be shortly inhabited by the fourth generation of my family. I want to express -- well, first of all I wanted to express my thanks to the many eloquent speakers who have preceded me. I think they have given you some sense of the lack of confidence that exists in substantial sections of this community about your installation and about your mission.

All I can add to this is to suggest that your government, its major leaders in their own writings have indicated their interest in offensive biological warfare. They have called a project for a new American Century from which comes many policy-making officials in the Defense Department. Will it develop into weapons whose very existence is enhanced by genetic manipulation and which can be targeted to specific ethnicities. I assume that means other than white Americans or Europeans.

I also have no confidence in the scientific credentials of the persons here present or of their leaders who, after all, for the most part seem to believe that dinosaur bones were put in the universe by the government to seduce us in Scripture.

I have no confidence in your honor, your integrity or your morals. For after all what can be a more egregious crime against humanity than to turn loose, by accident or design, the agents of

death and diseases. It's my earnest belief that your national leadership are an aggressive cabal, interested in the domination of other countries and the forceful seizure of their resources.

I believe that this is a supreme crime against humanity and at the same time for which we (inaudible) in our more humble days, the leadership of not governing. Is it [not] possible to find words strong enough to condemn the work that we do or do we know that there is [in] military tactics no difference between defense and offense.

I call upon all my fellow citizens to remember the salient facts and to remember your history. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, sir. Next to the microphone is Victor Kurz of Dixon, Missouri.

MR. KURZ: I'm Victor Kurz of Dixon, Missouri. I'll probably be the only (inaudible) speaking here. My family lives about ten miles from the live agent training facility for (inaudible) [*at Fort Leonard Wood*]. When I heard what the project was, it interested me, I wanted to come here and hear what you had to say about what was being proposed at this facility since I'm also a former Department of Defense employee who had worked for the chemical school and had some interaction at Fort Detrick.

There's several questions I have and several things that concern me. One: I'm not a proponent or fan of large government. So I hear that the Department of Homeland Security has proposed a facility out here at Fort Detrick with the size and the scope of the work I saw on your slide and I know that the presidential decision (inaudible) record was signed back in April. I wonder how Homeland Security got involved in this project in a matter of several months and how far back that was planned.

The second thing that would concern me is that the two largest government agencies that we have right now, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Defense, which seem to be at odds in working in an integrated fashion, as you say. DOD has to submit to like the defense production agency, the Soldier Biological Chemical Command, and I'm interested in hearing how all of those are going to be integrated into the workings of this facility.

The last thing that I would be concerned about is that the Department of Homeland Security is entering into the biological terrorism area, whether this is going to include the development of biological weapons or biological anti-weapons because the United States had a moratorium on for so many years. Is that going to continue or is it going to be cast aside to the wind. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, sir. Sally Familton of Frederick, Maryland.

MS. FAMILTON: Thank you, my name is Sally Familton; I live just north of here in the Clover Hill community so I am one of the other folks here who cross the community from the other end. I'm on the north side. I've been on the Clover Hill Board for several years and president for two years. So I spend time representing that community, but really I'm here as a concerned resident of the community.

First thank you for, I feel like I'm getting a real education listening to people who come from other locations, Aberdeen, Missouri. I'm trying to seek some (inaudible) in what's going on here. I served on the Chamber of Commerce board in this community and I know they're all interested in good jobs here in Frederick. And, many people feel that this is a great opportunity for us to have additional employment at high levels.

But I have a series of questions. I didn't realize this was as much as to make a statement. I'd like to pose some questions here. One question I have is what labs, CDC or who else has this number of the BSL 3 and 4, particularly level labs that are being proposed here. Are these -- I get the impression this is fairly rare and I'd like to just know how this would relate to other communities across the country.

The joke has been, living in Clover Hill, that if we took a wire cutter we could all get onto the Fort Detrick campus fairly readily by moving through some of our neighbors' back yards.

What's going to be done if this is going to be moved forward about security on the campus? I realize some of the buildings are more secure, but the general sentiment is things have not been as secure. I know people, the scientists on the NCI campus and other places with their badges have been able to access these buildings. Just a practical consideration.

I didn't hear any mention of Department Agriculture and I thought there was a piece of Department of Agriculture that was fitting here and again I'm just trying to figure this all out.

And, finally, I think we've heard some statements from people here who have information that I certainly don't. In the article in last week's Frederick News Post there was comments made by several biochemists or people who are professionals in this field really expressing some grave concerns about a facility such as this and I would just like to know, I guess I could call the newspaper, but we looked at what some of those questions are. What would be the department's response to those questions?

I think some of the things that were raised earlier, such as by somebody who is a biochemist himself, the potential for accidents. We all know that the more you have things occurring the more likelihood something inadvertently can go wrong. And, there's just so many concerns with these safety hazards.

And, finally I guess I got here you were talking about approximately a hundred and twenty new jobs for the Homeland Security Agency. I mean including construction, whatever, but how many more jobs are we talking about overall being created, because if we're going to be absorbing a huge amount of risk and community concerns what's the payoff. And, aside from people have used the National Homeland Security (inaudible) just kind of a conventional Frederick County or Frederick City, what other payoffs are for the community other than a hundred and twenty plus jobs. I guess that's my question.

Thank you for this opportunity and I think we all have a lot to learn from each other. And, I look forward to learning the answers to these questions. Thank you.

MR. TIGHE: Thank you. And, this is our last question. If anyone had wanted to make comments, wanted to make a comment or statement at the microphone tonight you're still welcome to raise your hand. We still have some extra cards. And, those who did not speak tonight are also welcome to submit their further comments to the contact information on the agenda that's in your packet. To the microphone is Karen Skinner, Frederick, Maryland.

MS. SKINNER: Hi, I am Karen Skinner. I'm a chemist by training and I work at NIH in Rockville now. So I would like to address the fact that this is the environmental impact statement meeting and I feel personally lacking a lot of information and request that (inaudible) and I'd like to reinforce what the previous speaker said and some of the other speakers as well. I'd like to request that several issues you've specifically addressed in this environmental impact evaluation.

The first is about the (inaudible) of containment, but I also heard that (inaudible) was going to be developed. So, what special containment procedures will be applied to all of the different animals and vectors that will be studied? Will insect vectors be studied? Fish, what will be studied and how will they be contained, particularly (inaudible) emergencies, electricity goes out, the refrigeration, that sort of thing. How would those models be destroyed if it becomes necessary?

No. 2 is who will be the people responsible for maintaining the facility and the animal facilities, will they be low paid fully trained employees or will they be contractors, will they be government employees who remain accountable?

What commission should be made to assure that the Frederick area has adequate medical facilities should there be an emergency and the citizens of Frederick be effected? What would be available to us?

Will this facility study only human diseases or will it be studying animal and plant diseases as well? And, will the transportation pattern be altered for the removal of hazardous waste and the delivery of reagents and materials? Will there be any alteration and how will that affect us?

MR. TIGHE: Thank you, ma'am. As a reminder of the process here, these are obviously public comments, but there is not just a mechanism, but a commitment that these comments being gathered now and through July 8th would be addressed in the draft of our environmental statement and that then too yields an additional forty-five day open period for comment, so the questions and comments are appreciated as well.

There being no additional cards for comments that have been put out I'd like to reiterate my thanks and the thanks of the representatives of the department, both for you coming and those who spoke tonight. Your comments are an essential and valued part of this process.

Thank you. This is the end of the formal part of the evening, but I believe it's possible there are sodas and snacks are still out there. Everyone is welcome to grab a refreshment. Thank you again.

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